

*The* **H** *Magazine for the Christian Home*  
**Hearthstone**

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Drills or Frills?—*Frances Dunlap Heron*  
Helping Them Work and Like It!—*Robert H. Eads*

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# The **H** Magazine for the Christian Home Hearthstone

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## Contents

### ARTICLES

Drills or Frills? . . . . .	Frances Dunlap Heron	1
God Answered My Prayers . . . . .	Kathleen Hanford	4
Baby-Sitting—An Education . . . . .	Beatrice J. Latimer	10
Helping Them Work and Like It! . . . . .	Robert H. Eads	12
A Child Grows and Chooses . . . . .	Juanita Purvis Shacklett	15
Does the Church Help? (Study Article and Guide for Parents' Groups) . . . . .	Elizabeth N. Jones	22

### STORIES

Man Meets Cat . . . . .	Berniece Roer	7
Story for Children Roger Robin Sings . . . . .	Ginie Glasmeir	21

### FEATURES

Hearthstone's Visiting Nurse . . . . .	Beulah France, R.N.	14
Today Is Very Special . . . . .	Doris Clore Demaree	16
Worship in the Family with Children . . . . .		18
Biblegram . . . . .	Hilda E. Allen	25
A Who's Foolin' Whom Party . . . . .	Loie Brandom	26
This Is the Way We Did It: "We Grew in Grace" . . . . .	Vivian Preston	28
Family Counselor . . . . .	Donald M. Maynard	29
Books for the Hearthside . . . . .		31
Over the Back Fence . . . . .		32
Poetry Page . . . . .	Inside Back Cover	

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### Push-Button Schools

A young schoolgirl was asked, "What kind of school would you like to attend?" "Push-button," she replied. This would be a novel answer to parents' and teachers' problems providing for the educational needs of children. But, of course, we recognize such expediency in our schools as the last thing wanted. Parents are being urged to favor a return to the old methods in the educational process. However, one wonders if this is the answer. Try reading "Drills or Frills?" by Frances Dunlap Heron before you make up your mind concerning this issue.

One of the favorite ways of earning spending money of young teens is baby-sit. "Baby-Sitting—an Education" by Beatrice J. Latimer tells of other values involved when your teenager assumes this responsibility.

"Helping Them Work and Like It" by Robert H. Eads, provides reasonable explanations as to why children occasionally or always balk when confronted with work to be done. Knowing the causes for refusing to do the job assigned, aids the parent to move toward means of helping the youngsters experience the joy that work can be. You will find this holds true the next time you are faced with "I don't want to . . ."

Laws of growth—whether physical, emotional, mental, or spiritual—should be understood by parents. Development of their children to full stature in all these areas is a constant concern for Christian parents. There is assistance for you in the article, "A Child Grows and Chooses," written by Juanita Purvis Shacklett.

Spring is in the air—and all around everywhere. It is an excellent time for sharing its joys and meaning with your family. Opportunity for family worship experiences can arise at the least expected or anticipated place. Try using the suggestions given in this section, "Worship in the Family with Children," pages 18, 19, and 20.

**Coming Next Month:** "Do You Know What Your Child Tells About You?" "More Than a Roof," "Keeping Them Interested in Church," and "Your Home Can Be Their Home."

Until then

R. C.



# Drills

or

# Frills?

by Frances  
Dunlap  
Heron

What's wrong with our schools?

LABORIOUSLY MARY JANE PRINTS a brief letter to "Dear Granma: Thank you for the braslit." Her brother Jim counts seven marbles in one pocket, eight in the other, announces a total of sixteen. Mother and Father shake their heads dolefully. "What's wrong with those teachers at George Washington Elementary School?" cries Mom.

Pop, fresh from an editorial in a national magazine, mutters, "It's that John Dewey and his *progressive education*: let kids 'learn by experience, acquire skills that will develop their whole selves, just to their peers.' A lot of foolishness. In my day we went to school to learn!"

Throughout our nation today such charges are being hurled at our educational system. We're behind Russia in output of engineers and scientists because followers of John Dewey have produced a generation of undisciplined, apathetic boys and girls who can't read, can't write, can't spell, can't multiply, and can't diagram a sentence! The alarm extends over into church school.

A disgruntled mother shoves her son's workbook at the Junior Department Superintendent. "Where's the Bible in this?" she demands. "I asked Sammy to repeat the sixth commandment and he didn't know it."

"You can't expect children to study and behave in Sunday school," moans the Junior Department Superintendent, "when they are allowed to do as they please at public school."

We who call ourselves Christian parents, therefore, concerned with both the secular and the religious instruction of our sons and daughters, are deeply affected by the current furor over techniques and emphases. For thirty years writers of church school curriculum and trained leaders in religious education have followed secular education's trend toward experience-centered materials and methods. Un-

doubtedly the time is ripe for rethinking and re-evaluation. The danger is that in anti-communist hysteria we overdo the pressure on educators to "crack down on the kids, teach them the fundamentals, throw out the frills." In recklessly maligning John Dewey for his efforts to make learning attractive, meaningful, and individually creative, we fail either to "think" or to "evaluate." In shouting for elimination of "life adjustment" courses and for rote mastery of content, we would do well to remember that our Master Teacher, Jesus Christ, placed highest value on the personal human spirit as opposed to pharisaical adherence to the letter of the law.

So much is being written and spoken in denunciation of schools and teachers that I am moved to defend the principles (if not all the "principals") toward which they have aimed in recent years. Continuously from 1938 to 1957, my husband and I had from one to four offspring enrolled in moderately progressive public schools near Chicago (city of Dewey's pioneering pedagogy). This grounding was sufficiently adequate to enable two of them to obtain university degrees, which are also in sight for the younger two. In 1943 my husband ran for the district school board but was defeated by old-time residents who disapproved of his platform—more pay for teachers.

Both of us recall vividly the now-revered days of content-centered instruction. Those were the days, declare the anti-Deweyites, "when kids learned reading, grammar, history, geography, and arithmetic." Teachers left to the home such frills as sex education and clean fingernails and how to get along with people. They certainly did. Coughers sans handkerchiefs kept a constant round of colds in the schoolroom all winter. Sex—indeed, Professor Craighead would have been trespassing on



Jimmy, caught in the middle of this controversy.

Many are advising:

Return to the  
old methods.

Is this the answer?



—Harold M. Lamb

forbidden extracurricular ground had the word even appeared in our spelling books. (Parents didn't mention it at home either.) As for life adjustment, my rural school really ruined Arthur's. Arthur was —another shameful word—"adopted." We taunted him, kept him out of games, tattled on him. Teacher was on our side, for everybody knew Arthur was a bad boy, a trial to his foster parents. There was smug relief when Arthur got sent back to the orphans' home.

Why worry about Arthur's future, we who knew the alphabet before we learned to read, we who could figure square root, and we who never hesitated over nine times eight! But what of Henry, who, in spite of repeated drillings, never mastered the multiplication tables? And alphabet-conscious Florence, who halted before every word in a story to spell it out? In an aura of middle-aged nostalgia, many of my contemporaries blandly forget the failings as they decry their teen-agers' academic shortcomings.

Among these alumni of unfrilled fundamentals is sure to be the one-time prize map-drawer who vows the United States can get along shunning the rest of the world; the disgusted ex-memorizer of the Declaration of Independence who doesn't vote because all politicians are crooked; the housewife who, on authority of my local grocery clerk, passes right by tuna at thirty-one cents a can but rushes to grab it at a "sale price" of three cans for one dollar; and the piner for the past who proclaims: "My English teacher taught *we* pupils the classics. She read Shakespeare to my classmates and *I*. But my daughter *don't* know anything different *than* this modern stuff." Yet parents such as these are being urged by excited journalists and lecturers to demand that school heads revise curriculum; that methods courses for prospective teachers be minimized; that class-

room experiences in dramatizing the United Nations give way to an analysis of the Crusades; and that a teacher's worth be judged on the amount of homework he assigns.

We're thankful our two sons and two daughters are finishing school before parents and editors take over. We profited much from the comments written on report cards concerning our children's work habits, attitudes toward classmates, and group participation. Such gibberish (cry the present-day reformers) must go in favor of a monthly specimenized record of B-minus in reading or 84 in penmanship (and no more of that manuscript printing start right out with cursive script). It is true that our quartet did not always work up to capacity as revealed in school-administered standardized tests (heritage from progressive pioneers). A lack of incentive could be traced to pupils grouped by ability and interest. That a piling on of homework, as currently advocated, would have inspired a zeal for search for knowledge, we are doubtful. The young Herons utilized study periods at school for completing their assignments.

For their health's sake, we wished them to have time for outdoor play after school and to retire at a regular hour. With bus and school schedule claiming them from 7:45 A.M. to 4:30 P.M., I liked having them share family chores and diversions in the evenings. We were glad when classroom projects ("dirty progressive word") carried over to our home. Such a one was Ambassadors of Friendship. Pupils of our elementary school and their families sent food, clothing, toilet items, and letters to overseas families whose names were obtained from local persons having relatives and friends in distressed countries after World War II. Our teachers coordinated with social studies the letters and songs received in return. From these contacts



ldren learned more of the history and customs of other lands, of the universality of human nature, of the necessity for world peace than they would be remembered from many pages of textbook reading alone. They grew in understanding of the possibilities of citizens of the atomic world. They developed lasting attitudes.

Other projects taught them democratic functions. Class elections, with frequent changes of officers, encouraged initiative and exercise of free speech in campaigning." By the time Don was a high school senior, the stimulus of such "frills" prompted him and other members of our community church youth group to conduct a mock political rally. To imitate Estes Kefauver, Don threw himself into hours of reading, research, and speech-practicing, a triumph that re-enforced his interest in pursuing a career of public service.

In his classes he was surrounded by American citizens of varying racial, religious, economic, and intellectual backgrounds. He might have studied harder and mastered more information if all could have competed on the same level of ability. But he learned other valuable "lessons"; for example, that the son of a factory worker with an unpronounceable last name could be the best in the "frilly" manual arts class (Don barely passed with a lopsided tray).

It thus leading young people to satisfy individual needs and express themselves, progressive public schools of today give slower pupils far greater advantages than did the schools of my day. Superior students, now as then, who apply themselves do well academically. All—the slow and the apt—know much more about the world and people outside of books than we did.

These personal observations are backed by scientific tests, which show further that today's students in progressive schools rank in absolute acquisition of facts as well as or better than those who have had additional education. These tests are described in chapter seven of Carleton Washburne's *What Is Progressive Education?* an excellent little book that teachers after the truth should read.)

Any system is subordinate to a dedicated, imaginative teacher. Mrs. Petty, our sixth grade teacher, neither let pupils "run wild" nor did she "crack down" with iron discipline. Under her guidance, classroom self-government worked. Her students behaved well and studied well because there was mutual respect between them and their teacher. Thus they learned what was in books, through interest, activity, experience, understanding, and practice.

The fact that some years our Sue, Al, Fran, and Ben did not draw a Mrs. Petty was no reflection on progressive education. The teachers who in 1959 did not stir pupil curiosity, maintain order, and present subject matter appealingly would have scored better in a one-room school in 1908. The fault lies in their lack of understanding of children and techniques of teaching—even a lack of enthusiasm for their poor-paying job. It is as ridiculous to devalue the value, to teachers, of courses in psychology and

in the science of teaching as it would be to eliminate homiletics and pastoral counseling from seminary curricula and to train preachers only in the Bible. To inspire a budding Edison or Einstein calls for more than a stern teacher crammed full of physics.

By increased salaries and prestige, improved facilities and surroundings, we must make teaching as much of a challenge to teachers as learning can be to students. We need more teachers who will show students how to study effectively; who will lead them into the joy of learning, not for the sake of mere knowledge but for the satisfaction of using it creatively to the benefit of mankind. This kind of learning comes, not from memory drills, but from thinking and comprehending what our culture and traditions mean. Long years of church school direction have shown me that the third-grader who can recite the Ten Commandments most glibly may be the one most adept at swiping peaches from his neighbor.

John Dewey, who knew that education must be continually *progressing*, would encourage intelligent evaluation of teacher training, school buildings, curriculum, goals, and administration. Let us as parents and citizens pay willingly for the changes and improvements required for our fast-growing school population in a fast-shrinking world. But let us not throw out the motivation, the methods, and the democratic ideals of progressive education. Let us, instead, make it work better!

—H. Armstrong Roberts



Many schools are providing the opportunity for young people to obtain skills in the fields in which they have greatest interest.



# God answered my prayers

by Kathleen Hanford

REGARDLESS OF OUR INDIVIDUAL creeds, every living person knows the value of prayer. Throughout the historical ages man has always prayed in time of need. As Christians, we pray to God very often through his son, Jesus Christ. The Mohammedans just as devoutly pray to Allah, while the Zoroastrians pray to the Good Spirit of Light.

It is a good thing that mankind possesses the power to pray, believing wholeheartedly and faithfully that their prayers will be answered. I am just one of the many who send my small prayers heavenward whenever the need is upon me—just as you do, too.

Brought up very strictly in the Episcopal faith, it was an every-night occurrence for me to fall on

my knees to pray each evening. Married in 1939, I prayed fervently each night that our baby would be a girl. At the same time my friend, Pearl, who was married the same fall, prayed in her Mormon Tabernacle for a boy and our newly found friend, Dorothy, prayed for a girl.

Pearl—so vivaciously lovely with her stormy mass of hair and her petiteness—was delivered of a girl and promptly, as is the way with mothers, forgot all her prayers for a boy. Then it was Dorothy's time for delivery and her daffodil-blond hair was a halo around her vivid face the day I saw her boy for the first time—she who had prayed so hard and long for a girl!

I kept on waiting and praying

and wondering until the night tragedy struck. I became so violently ill with uremic poisoning that I was rushed to the hospital for a Cesarean operation in order to save my own life. My husband says I was still praying, eyes screwed tightly shut and with a peaceful face, when I lost consciousness.

My baby was a girl—the most exquisite three pounds of loveliness I have ever seen. Exactly I had prayed for, she arrived; live for fourteen hours.

I never saw her alive. It was the stillness of death that she was brought for me to see.

I prayed in despair the night the doctors told me I could never have a child. In agony and desperate appeal I prayed, knowing

*"I prayed fervently each night"*

—H. Armstrong Roberts

HEARTHSTONE





**"I kept on waiting and praying and wondering  
until the night tragedy struck."**



ing all the while that it was hopeless.

Knowing I could never clasp to my breast a child of my own, I began praying for a baby to adopt.

It took months to fill out all the required forms, get in all the medical data, persuade my friends to recommend my husband and me as parents, and then the long months of waiting began.

Every night, I prayed for the miracle of a daughter. Once a month, we went in person to the Adoption Center to renew our pleas for a child and well do I remember the day the superintendent, so tired of the hopeful pleas he heard eternally, so worn out with all his cares of placing babies exactly where they should go, took my hand in his and said, "Are you praying for your little girl?"

Head upflung, and proudly, I answered, "Yes."

Only those parents who have lost a beloved baby can understand the torment I endured those two long years that seemed to have no end. Going with Pearl to buy a dress for her Pearlina was a little agony each time we ventured forth. Seeing Pearlina with Dorothy's Ronald never failed to make me think: There should be a third small form beside them!

On such nights the only solace was for my husband and myself

to visit our own baby with a wee bouquet of flowers—the only gift we could make our child.

The praying nights grew into months and into years before THE LETTER finally came—the one informing us a baby girl was awaiting our appraisal.

How does one describe the ecstasy of that night? I didn't pray an asking-prayer that glorious night. I thanked God over and over again, for the blessing he was about to bequeath us.

For the first time, I was able to lift from our darkest closet the box in which had been packed away all the small clothes for our baby girl. I could touch again the wee, white, crocheted booties. I could croon over the deep pink blankets and the Alice Blue Gown.

Our friends ran to us with everything they thought might be of use. Pearlina's eyes were big with wonder as her parents swung her down the street in the white wicker bassinet which she had outgrown. Ronald's chubby little fist deposited his favorite, cuddly bear on my lap, "For your little baby," he informed me, seriously, "I'm too big for JO-JO, now." And he stalked bravely away, but not before I saw the dejected stoop to his sturdy little shoulders and hastily assured him our baby didn't need JO-JO just now. Face alight, he snatched his toy, leav-

ing us to sort out the clothes and talk our woman-talk.

The fun it was to buy the first bottles, the first baby lotions. Again, I wasn't praying: I found myself saying over again and again: Thank you, God. Thank you, God.

But the next day, as my husband and I ran, hand in hand, up the steps we had approached so many times just to plead our cause I was praying again—praying for the strength to enter that long baby ward and glimpse Our Girl.

She lay, arms upflung, small face as round as my own, dark lashes hiding her blue, blue eyes. We stood, gazing down at our baby until the small eyes flew open, the fists clenched and flailed and the small, furious cry of hunger shocked us to our toes. I looked pleadingly at the nurse who nodded, happily before I stooped to hold her for the first time.

Digging all ten toenails into my body as ten fingernails clutched my neck, she cuddled into my arm heaving a small sigh of contentment as she felt our love pour over and enfold her.

God answered my prayers and I am thankful.

Thankful for our daughter without whom life would be quite empty. Thankful for our son who adopted, also. But most of all I'm thankful for prayer. Prayer has given us the whole world and everything in it.



JEFF REYNOLDS is a big, strong, he-man sort of guy. However, his reaction didn't fit his physique. The other night when he innocently opened the door leading to the basement, and the kitten happened to be lurking in the dark in the center of the top step, he leaped at him, and one would have thought, from the bloodcurdling yell exploded in the little suburban household, that he was being attacked by a full-grown lioness.

"Jeff! What's wrong?" called his wife, Connie. He had already retired, but the terror in Jeff's voice made her leap from her bed and dash into the kitchen tugging with the sleeves of her robe. "What happened, Jeff?"

"It's that stray cat Ted picked up!" he snapped. "Why in the world did you let him bring it home in the first place?"

"I didn't! It just came here. And if you could have seen Ted's face, you would have let him keep it, and you know it!" Connie was on the defensive, as usual, where Ted and the kitten were concerned. Then Jeff spotted his eight-year-old son standing peering around the doorway, clutching the escaped kitten close. "Ted!" He strived for self-control. "Take that cat down in the storage room in the basement."

When the boy was halfway down the stairs, he tripped, "And close the door tight! And the next

are able to find another home for it."

Then, with a hint of tears in her eyes and voice, she turned abruptly and went back to bed.

Jeff stood still for a moment, baffled. One moment you could have a quiet peaceful household, and the next moment your wife and child were mad at you! He headed toward the basement stairs again, wondering what it was he had wanted to do down there—maybe he'd think of it if he went on down.

But thinking was a difficult chore, with a cat clawing up a door and demanding freedom. Jeff poked around a pile of tools on his workbench and had another try at recalling what he had meant to do.

"Meow, meow, meow, meow."

He crashed a monkey wrench into a junk box on the floor and stomped back upstairs, slamming the door behind him.

Next morning while driving to work with Tom Hempstead, his share-the-ride partner, Jeff filled him in on his latest woes, and asked in a not too hopeful voice, "How would you like to have a female kitten named Robin? For free?"

"No, thanks!" Tom laughed. "However, I just remembered something that will take it off your hands."

"What's that? I'm desperate!"

"Put it in your car tonight and take it out in the county to Culver Road and let it out at . . ."



# Man Meets Cat

by Berniece Roer

**beware of the CAT!**

"If you don't put that cat out, tell me!"

Then he switched back to his wife. "Connie, you know we agreed a long time ago that we weren't going to live with animals in the house. You've got to be a little more firm with Ted. Fix that cat a bed in the service porch and see that she stays outside—the next county would suit me fine."

"We *can't* leave her outside," Connie broke in.

"What do you mean, we *can't*?"

"Because Mrs. Smith next door complained this morning that it was getting in her children's sandbox. That's why!"

"Well, we sure can't afford to fence-in that back yard this year," Jeff thundered on in a sarcastic manner. "I guess if we don't let him keep it, though, we'll have to take Ted to a psychiatrist to find out what's wrong with *us*."

His small son scurried past on his way to his room. "Oh, stop worrying about it!" Connie, though not the screeching kind, was screeching. "Teddy knows that he's only supposed to keep the kitten until we

"Oh, no," Jeff cut in. "I couldn't do that. I wouldn't want anything to happen to the little old alley cat."

"No, let me finish," said Tom. "Nothin's going to happen to it! There's a little old lady who lives in a shack just off Culver Road, and I'll bet she's got forty cats! She's nuts about them, and takes in every stray that comes along. I hear her old man left her a small annuity and she spends it all on these cats."

Tom paused, and noticing the uncertain look on Jeff's face, he added, "Oh, kids get over these things quick. Get him some goldfish or something and he'll forget all about the cat."

"Well," said Jeff slowly, "I guess I'll have to use your idea. We haven't been able to find anyone who wants her."

All day long at his work, Jeff had a vague and undefinable feeling inside him. But he couldn't think of anything that should make him feel that way. Anyway, after tonight he wouldn't have to put up



with Robin any longer, and things should be more relaxing around home.

At the dinner table that night, Jeff wondered if he should tell Ted now, or wait until morning.

Jeff wasn't very hungry, but his son seemed to have a stupendous appetite for so small a body. Why put off an unpleasant task? He heard himself blurt out the words: "Ted, I've found someone who'll take the kitten! I'm going to take Robin out to her tonight."

The boy seemed to sense something unspoken, and suddenly seemed to be having trouble swallowing his food. Connie laid down her fork and sat motionless.

For cryin' out loud, thought Jeff. *You'd think I had committed some horrible sin!* And all I did was find a place for a cat *we* certainly can't keep!

After Connie had sent Ted to bed early, Jeff found himself on a deserted road, with Robin in the back of the car.

Driving along in the bright moonlight, he shored up his conscience with mental sandbags. Tomorrow, he would buy a large fish-bowl, and stock it with some real nice goldfish. Ted would like that. Sure, he realized, Ted would miss Robin; but after all, like Tom Hempstead said, kids get over these things.

Jeff slowed down and following Tom's instructions, he recognized the little path leading to the old lady's shack. He pulled over near the side of the road, stopped the car, reached down and deposited Robin in the tall roadside grass. The kitten was so tiny that he seemed to be sending her into a jungle—a cold, damp, dark jungle. She raised one paw, and hesitated for an instant as though in fear, then the little

reddish-hued form disappeared from view.

*Would she find the path?* he wondered. *Oh, sure she would.*

A car without lights had stopped some distance behind him, and suddenly a man was upon him flashing a constable's badge.

"Say, don't you know there's a law against the abandoning of animals?"

Jeff's heart skipped a beat. *Oh no!* he thought. With a feeling of obscure panic, he wanted to turn and run like a boy.

"No, I didn't," he finally managed to answer. "But I'm really not abandoning it. You see, I'm sure that old lady who lives over there will feed it and I . . ."

"Oh, sure, that's what they all say." The man was chewing something, and had hooked a thumb under an armpit. "Yeah, sure," he said. Then he handed down a welcome bit of judicial comment. "But I'll tell you what! You find that kitten, and you'll probably get off with just a twenty-five dollar fine." He crossed his feet nonchalantly and leaned calmly against Jeff's car. "But you better start lookin'!"

Jeff started lookin'.

He called and he crawled. He threshed around in the weeds and bushes trying to scare Robin into view. Thorns tore at his skin, and he wasn't aware that he had dropped his hat and walked back and forth over it several times.

After about twenty desperate minutes, the constable yelled, "Hey buddy, let's get going . . . the kitten's gone . . . I'll have to take you in."





Jeff, dirty and disheveled, walked back toward his son; but he stooped to part a clump of weeds as a last resort, and there she sat! Her little pointed face gazing at him with questioning eyes.

He went down on his knees, slowly, so as not to startle her, and gently put both hands around the damp little body. He was so glad to see her, that for one fleeting moment he wanted to tell her so. "Let's go!" he called to the constable, and Jeff put Robin in the car, and the constable followed them to the police station. A while later Jeff stood before a night-judge listening to a lecture on the proper way to unloose one's self from an unwanted kitten. On request, he parted with twenty-five dollars.

While driving home, the realization that he could have been a news item in tomorrow's paper (picture paper, maybe), shocked him into a new determination to rid himself of Robin.

And the next morning it was apparent to everyone, including his son, that Jeff Reynolds simply couldn't bear the sight of the kitten.

On the way to work, Tom Hempstead asked, "Well, did you find the little old lady I told you about?" "Yes, I found her, and I also found, *officially*, that the proper way to unlatch yourself from a kitten is through the Humane Society. And *that's* gonna be my first official act when I get home tonight."

\*\*\*\*\*

Jeff stooped . . . and there she sat, her little pointed face gazing questions at him

\*\*\*\*\*

But Robin wasn't there when he arrived home and neither was Ted. Connie said they had both been gone for hours and she was beginning to worry about them.

At that moment the boy burst in the door yelling, "Mom, Dad, come on quick . . . Robin's dying!" He gasped for breath. "Hurry up quick. This way, I'll show you."

They hurried after Ted, toward a group of boys gathered around a storm-sewer a block from their home.

"Lean down here, Dad, and listen," said Ted. And Jeff's dark head went down beside the towhead of his son. He could hear the 'mews' of the kitten far back in the sewer. He thought he could also hear the 'thuds' of the boy's heart—or was that his own heart?

"Here, Robin, here, girl . . . come on out," coaxed Ted. But Robin, in her dark, watery prison, only cowered faintly, apparently afraid to walk up the dripping pipe, that had been so easy to walk down. Jeff stood thoughtfully rubbing his chin. "Well, there's not enough water for her to drown in, but she'll probably starve." Then he turned to Ted. "Your mother said you've been out gallivantin' all day! Where were you?" he demanded.

"I've been trying to find a home for her, Dad. I've been asking at all the houses that have fences. But *nobody* wants her," his son answered, keeping his eyes lowered to the ground.

The evening air was turning cool, and Jeff noted the little goose flesh on his son's bare arms. When he saw the thin, boyish body give a little quiver, something collapsed within him. For a flick of time, he saw himself when eight years old. So long ago—only yesterday. Then he felt a sudden need to reach out and gather his child close to him; as he had seen the boy gather up the kitten. But, realizing that would be the last thing Ted would want to happen in front of the other boys, Jeff merely let his hand find its way to his son's shoulder, and he gently gave it a soft squeeze.

"Well, I'll tell you, Ted. I'm going to get your kitten out of there if I can. Then we'll take her to the Humane Society early in the morning."

They all begged, badgered, and baited the terrified Robin. But neither fish nor milk was tempting enough to move her. Long sticks poked down the incline only made her shrink farther back.

"Well, boys, she just won't come out on her own, will she? Ted, run home and get a crowbar and a bucket."

Soon they were attempting to pry off the sewer-inlet grate, to the delight of the boys and the ever-increasing crowd of men, women, and children. They were closed in so tightly on Jeff, that it was difficult to work.

However, a cruising police officer didn't think it was such a jolly idea. He appeared to have an aversion to pried-off sewer-inlet grates. Jeff envisioned himself on his way to the police station for the second time in twenty-four hours. And all over one small kitten! *Was his life to be a constant run-in with the cops over this cat?*

But after Officer McGillicuddy dropped on his hands and knees and heard Robin's faint cries, he pitched in to help. They ripped off the grating, filled the bucket with water from a near-by house, and began the tricky operation of flushing out Robin.

As time passed, it showed that Robin wouldn't flush. Too much water would drown her, and not enough merely scared her.

It was very late when Jeff straightened his weary back and considered the situation hopeless. The crowd had thinned out; even a news-photographer was walking back to his car. Jeff looked down at his son and said, "Well, Ted, I don't know . . . but it looks like we had better call it a night."

The boy's head nodded acceptance to his father's decision. Then he pleaded. "O.K. Dad, but can I stay here with her for a while? I won't be scared. You and Mom can go on home."

Although the thought skimmed through Jeff's mind that he was spending too many evenings capturing cats, he suddenly grabbed up the bucket, tied a long rope on the handle, and handed the other end of the rope to Officer McGillicuddy. Jeff got down on his

(Continued on page 25)



# Baby - Sitting - An Education



Denise, daughter of Mrs. Latimer, helps with the bedtime prayers.

HAVE YOU EVER CONSIDERED the excellent training a teen-age girl is receiving when she baby-sits? It is one of the finest a young girl can acquire, reasonably profitable, not too taxing physically, a builder of self-reliance and character.

I am the mother of two teen-age baby sitters. My daughters do so much sitting I keep pencil and pad at the telephone to book time place, and daughter available. The girls sit evenings, during the day on weekends and holidays, assist at children's parties, take children on outings, baby-sit in every sense of the word.

We feel this is a wonderful education. My daughters are learning to meet adults on an employer-employee footing, are developing a liking for people. They learn to follow orders, administer medicines, care for children. This last includes feeding, bathing and putting to bed, changing diapers, giving bottles.

The girls go into a great number of homes where they cannot help but note and compare various methods of housekeeping. This is bound to influence their own housekeeping and home management should they someday have homes of their own. And it has made them agree (however grudgingly) that I'm quite reasonable in expecting them to keep a neat bedroom. Until they saw other homes they thought they were being harassed by a too-tidy mother!

I believe baby-sitting teaches self-reliance. Girls learn to think for themselves, are forced to cope with unexpected problems on their own. This gives them confidence. As well, they learn to respect authority because they expect the



y  
eatrice J. Latimer

—photos from author

charges to be obedient. They also learn consideration for others. Once in a long time my daughters are faced with a problem that baffles them. Rather than call a parent from an outing, they will telephone me. This is usually enough to clear the air and I find, almost without exception, that they iron out the difficulty themselves. Doing so makes them feel capable, encourages them to not give up easily.

When the girls were younger they would look after children just for fun," knowing that they were not permitted to accept payment. As a result, when they became old enough to assume full responsibility in the absence of parents, it was easy for them to be satisfied with whatever parents felt they could afford for a sitter. Though the amounts of pay vary, the girls are willing to go to everywhere, work on a "first call, first serve" basis. Occasionally, for various reasons, they have refused payment, which pleased me very much. Evidently, being "neighborly" knows no age.

At that, the girls do well financially though they spend only a certain portion of each week's earnings. Everything over that amount they bank in their accounts. Withdrawals are made for me essential that cannot be covered by the family budget, for me luxury felt to be important, or simply left in the bank for future use. This year, for the first time, the girls bought their school textbooks, in all likelihood will continue to do so until they graduate. We feel that they are learning the value of money, and just this is laying the foundation for thoughtful, careful spending



Bedtime stories still capture the imagination of children. Denise seems to be just as interested as her charges.

of future pay checks once school is finished and they turn to full-time employment.

The girls have a few rules to make them better sitters. They are particular about their appearance when they go sitting—not dressed up, but certainly tidy. They never leave their charges under any condition, never spank nor use strong disciplinary measures. They do not have friends visit them while they are sitting, nor use the telephone except for something important. They try to be punctual and always report anything broken. They do not raid the refrigerator, eat only what is left for them (Once in a while I find myself sending a snack to a hungry teen-ager when some

parent in a hurry forgets to leave refreshments!).

If the baby-sitting schedule is heavy, the girls are excused from chores at home. However, the number of very late calls are limited as homework must be considered and sleep cannot be neglected. Very often, the girls have a better opportunity to study—when they baby-sit with young, sleeping children, than they would have had in our home.

I do not believe today's teen-age girl is irresponsible or lazy, with nothing on her mind but boys. I see a great many of them anxious to work, learn, co-operate. Baby-sitting is ideal for them, is an education no young girl can afford to miss.





It's the important man-sized jobs for them and great fun to help dad.

by Robert H. Eads

# Helping Them

# WORK

THE FAMILY COUNCIL had just ground to a temporary standstill! Jack, age eleven, had just protested: "Aw, everytime we meet as a family council we get more work piled on us. Why do we always have to do all that stuff, like cleaning the basement, mowing the lawn, helping with the screens? And Sis has to do the dishes, finish the ironing and make the beds . . . didn't you ever hear that all work and no play makes Jack a dull boy?"

Dad replied "I don't think you're very dull Jack! But seriously, once that *was* a needed warning. Farm and home chores required every member of the family to work very long hours, often at back-breaking labor. There was a time when little children worked in industries and were terribly exploited. But today we live in a radically different culture. Even dish washing and lawn mowing are mechanized and thousands of people have hours of leisure time that were quite unknown to their grandparents. Now, I think the warning might read 'All play and no work makes Jack a poor husband-risk and Jill a poor homemaker.' The way you do these small jobs now, in our family, is something of an indication of the way you will accept responsibility when you have your own home!"

It proved to be a fruitful discussion. As usual this family worked out of its temporary stalemate as each person "had his say," the facts of life were frankly

faced together, and the responsibilities self-assigned were accepted more or less cheerfully. How did they do it? Wouldn't you like to know?

## Each Has His Gift

In the Christian family it is understood that God has given each person a unique set of talents and abilities—differing gifts, but the same spirit. Therefore procedures are used that tend to bring out the best in each individual. To do this the laws of growth must be well known and accepted. Underlying all action is the spirit of understanding, love, and acceptance. The spirit of co-operation is to be made evident. Let us examine these general principles in relation to this matter of helping our children work and to like it.

The pressure of our society is toward productivity and earnings become a measure of success. In our time every human being is expected to find some work in which he can be self-supporting and productive. If you are able to turn out those things that are accepted by society, or to earn money to buy the things which are desired by millions then you are said to have "arrived." If for some reason one fails to support one's self and family, he is considered a social burden. Social pressures are upon us to maintain our economy, to make a living. We often tell



lose sight of the individual as a person, a creation of God who has needs, interests, and capacities to make a life. We suddenly awaken to the fact that the pressure to make everyone productive is a pressure of conformity; we must do the socially acceptable thing, think the socially acceptable thoughts, and own the socially desired products. Therefore our temptations as parents are sometimes to "bribe" our children with monetary rewards, or to force them into patterns of conformity and to forget that God has entrusted these children into our keeping, that with us and through us they may find fullness of life. A Christian family will cherish the uniqueness of each individual.

### Developing Highest Potentials

A Christian family will follow procedures that help each individual develop toward his highest potential. The idea of a family council in itself is a strong step in the right direction. Instead of the parents simply assigning jobs to be done, the family, together, can frankly discuss what tasks need to be done and who is capable of doing them. Although the human infant

that he can take on a man-sized job, he will cut down trees and shovel snow until he drops if properly motivated. There is challenge in the big task. Just as often he must be helped to see the importance and the necessity of the small task. Here again in the family council the relation of one task to another can be seen: dad does certain things, mother has her daily routines, brothers and sisters have theirs. Children can see that some of the things that their parents do are not always the most glamorous or even the most exciting things, but they all fit into a pattern of family need and well-being. Thus the less attractive jobs that children need to do for the group and for their own growth can be more cheerfully accepted if they see the cheerful example of parents daily.

### Overcoming Resistance

In spite of our best efforts we as parents often confront resistance and sometimes open rebellion against those jobs that must be done. What then? This is the testing point of parental maturity. It is increasingly common knowledge that all children in our

# and LIKE IT!

as a far longer period of dependency than most animals, he also has a built-in urge to be independent. When physically ready he would far rather walk than be carried. He soon wants to feed himself. He has a thirst for knowing all about his environment and a hunger for self-knowledge. Parents who take continued satisfaction in doing things *for* their children actually hamper their full development. (So we speak of "smother love.") It is far better to do things *with* their children. Parents do most for their children when they enable them to do the most for themselves.

The family council idea supports this practice of growing self-guidance. Duties self-assigned are always better done than those imposed by outside authoritarian pressure. It may be only a small responsibility of collecting the wastebaskets, taking out the milk bottles or uncovering the parakeet's cage in the morning, but it is a part of family responsibility and there is some assurance to the growing mind that "we all need each other." When a boy grows to a point of enjoying the use of his big muscles and shows

Watch it, big brother, don't overlook that helping hand coming right up!

—Harold Lindner, A. Devaney





culture have "mean" feelings. And they have personal hurts and fears. There should be no cause for alarm unless these are present in overabundance. Our major concern must be to help them handle normal feelings in a normal manner and then get on with the business at hand.

A note was found on the kitchen table in a childish scrawl: "I'm running away and I won't be home until supper!" Mother looked out the window and sure enough there he was walking down the drive with precious possessions tied in a bundle on the end of a stick! Her "little hobo" in rebellion against some set of chores to be done would not be home until supper! Soon it began to rain. Soon he slipped up on the porch. Mother just happened to see him and exclaimed "O son, I'm sorry supper isn't quite ready, but you had better come in where it's dry." He gave her an understanding adult-like smile and said, "Yea, I was getting wet!" *Acceptance* is a key word. The more we accept a child's *feelings*, the more he will accept our *rules*, our requirements. We all want to belong. We all want to be loved. We all want to feel important to someone. We all want to express ourselves, sometimes in resentment. We all want to have a sense of achievement, the feeling of a job well done.

#### Laws of Growth

This leads us to the important point of understanding the laws of growth, the age and maturity levels of children. While individuals vary greatly there is a well-defined pattern of growth described in any number of excellent books readily available in any library. Match their motor skills with tasks that are important at their level. Give them the tools that they need for their tasks and teach them to use them properly. Work and play are closely related in the

experience of the little child. If mother is ironing, little daughter needs to iron too. If dad is fixing something, son is there with his own tools to help. Blessed is that child whose parent does not feel that he's "in the way," for he shall know the joy of work through parental companionship. Of course there are times and places that call for "adults only" but the child who has been encouraged to "help" will more readily heed parental guidance because he senses that he still *belongs* even when his activity is temporarily curbed.

At the back entrance to our home is the family bulletin board. Across the top is a quotation from Emerson: "Be not merely good, be good for something!" Below is a space devoted to each member of our household. (When we had a dog there was even a space for "Misty.") For years beneath each name there have been simple stick-figure drawings depicting the responsibilities of each member of the family. They ran the gamut from keeping one's room in order, caring for pets, yard and household chores, to care of the car, minor and major repairs and special all-family projects. As the children grew their responsibilities naturally changed. The smallest ones had a daily check list which they could mark themselves. The oldest ones took initiative in suggesting ideas and writing notes as reminders. Every one was in the act. It has been fun to do the routines, but "craft nights" are special fun, for then individual talents, interests, and skills really have a chance to blossom forth. Now, when the third floor needs to be insulated and pine paneled for a teenager's hide-away, or the basement needs renovating for a rumpus room we can generate ideas and ingenuity and man power to do-it-ourselves because we have tried to help them to work and like it!



Hearthstone's Visiting Nurse

BEULAH FRANCE, R.N.

#### "Lo, the Winter Is Past"

"Lo, the winter is past . . . flowers appear . . . singing [of birds] is heard." Rejoice! Sing praises unto God!

Ask the grief-stricken: Why is your spirit sad? Sorrow is turned into joy by spiritual health.

Say to the discouraged: "God . . . comforts the downcast." Turn to him! Lean upon the Lord. "Remember the wonderful works that he has done! . . . Cast your burden on the LORD. . . He will sustain you."

Spread spiritual health among all. "Let your light so shine . . . that [others] may see your good works." You, yourself do likewise. Be filled with spiritual understanding. "Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, Rejoice!"

A sure sign of Christianity is unfailing joy. Live so radiantly that in every place your faith in God is spread abroad. Earnestly pray, this beautiful spring month, "Send out thy light and thy truth; let them lead me," and "I shall again praise him for my help and my God."

Spiritual health is the Christian's firm foundation. Like April itself it never fails to bring glad tidings of good things. It strengthens hope in God. Has it ever failed to give us May, after April showers have ended?



**CHILD IS BORN!** He lives! grows! He grows in many ways. The most quickly evident growth is physical. Parents, or adults caring for the child, contribute to, but do not control, physical growth. They provide food that nourishes and helps determine the rate of growth and strength of body. They provide the shelter and clothing for protection from the elements. Usually they teach the child rules of health and try to help him establish habits that will aid physical growth and well-being. The effort that parents make to help the physical growth of their child is important; but their responsibility and opportunity to help him grow goes beyond meeting his physical needs . . . for . . .

The child grows mentally. Consideration of ways parents can help their child to grow mentally could constitute this entire article. In brief, attention to questions, encouragement of interests, and provision for broadening experiences are ways parents help their child to grow mentally. When he goes to school, parents maintain an interest in his studies and activities. The effort that parents make to help the mental growth of their child is important; but their responsibility to help their child grow goes beyond meeting his mental needs . . . for . . .

The child grows spiritually. Both his personality and his character depend upon his spiritual growth. This is perhaps the most difficult growth to see. It is the

child's Christian growth. He, himself, must learn and grow through his own experiences and choices.

*Allow and encourage choices.* A child's experience of making choices should begin while he is very young. It is obvious that he will make choices about playthings and even about food, when he is quite young. By the time he is three, he can begin to make choices about the clothes he will wear. Of course, the mother will make available two equally acceptable possibilities; but the fact that the child chooses gives him a sense of accomplishment, and encourages him to make other choices. As he grows older he sometimes may go shopping with his parents for his own clothes. Favorable comments on choices that seem good ones and

photo by erb



Some mothers are tempted to do everything for their children. However, if responsibility and thoughtfulness are to be learned, the children have to practice responsibility through individual jobs such as putting clothes away.

## A Child Grows and Chooses

by Juanita Purvis Shacklett

most difficult growth to guide. It is the most important kind of growth for a child, if he is to grow into the fullness of life his parents want for him and that is his right as a child of God.

"When and how do we start to help our child in Christian growth?" parents ask. There is no "cut and dried" formula that will guarantee such growth, but a few principles and suggestions from persons of experience, insight, and knowledge of child development and of Christian character can be given here.

*Create the atmosphere.* Even before a child is born, the atmosphere of the home is established. The love of husband and wife for each other and their love of God create the atmosphere that influences and helps to condition the child at a very early age. Christian love in action, as parents set the example and the child watches, is his first experience toward Christian growth. But, important as they are, atmosphere and example are not enough for a

minimum comments on unwise choices will help the child to learn from his experiences.

Even a four- or five-year-old child can begin to choose songs, verses, and stories to be included in the family worship. Older children may choose Scripture selections and even subjects for discussion or consideration.

It is impossible to mention all of the possible situations or occasions in which children can be given an opportunity to make choices. These will vary with each household. However, one general statement can be made. As a guiding principle, allow and encourage your child to make as many of his own decisions as possible. This does not rule out parental guidance. Rather, it demands wise guidance, especially in decisions important to the development of character, moral stamina, or Christian personality. When such decisions are being made, the wise parents will try to help the child to visualize the results of his

(Continued on page 30)



# Today Is **VERY SPECIAL**

by Doris Clore Demaree

*photos by Harold M. Lambert*

Today is very special!  
Just why I do not know!  
But everyone is in his best  
Just like a party-o!





A string upon my finger  
But still I cannot say.  
I'm sure it isn't Christmas time,  
Nor is it Easter Day.



A ring upon my finger—  
All gold, and shiny-bright!  
It's such a bright and shiny thing  
Just like a ring of light.



Today is very special!  
Oh, can it be? Please say!  
Is this? But, no, it could not be!  
It is! It's MY BIRTHDAY!



# Worship in the family with children

## To Use with Younger Children

### Growing Things

It was a beautiful spring morning. "Let's take a walk today," Daddy said as he and Mother and Kent ate breakfast. "It is too nice to stay indoors."

"Yes, let's," Mother agreed.

"Yes, let's," Kent said too, then asked, "Why?"

"To see how many things are growing," Mother answered.

"We can take that old flat basket," Daddy went on. "I can fit straps around it so I can carry it on my back. Then if we find anything we want to bring home, we can put it in the basket."

Soon they were walking through the woods. An old road ran between the trees, but grass and flowers were growing in it. Baby leaves were growing on all the trees. Birds were singing.

"There are nests in the trees and eggs or baby birds in the nests," Mother said.

"Why?" Kent asked.

"That is part of God's good plan. Birds hatch and grow."

Mother saw some flowering bushes. "See how they've grown!" Mother said.

"Why?" Kent asked again.

"Leaves grow, flowers bloom, then berries grow for birds to eat. It is part of God's good plan," Mother answered. Then she asked, "Is it against the law to pick these flowers?"

"No," Daddy said, and took his knife and cut a spray. He thrust it into the basket on his back.

Kent found an old abandoned bird's nest.

"Can I have this?" he asked.

"Yes," Daddy answered, and put the nest into the basket on his back.

"Leaves, flowers, birds grow," Kent was chanting. "What else grows?"

"Children grow, too," Daddy said. "You have grown a lot. Once you were a tiny baby. You grew bigger and bigger, and you still are growing. It is God's plan for children."

"I'm glad," Kent said happily.

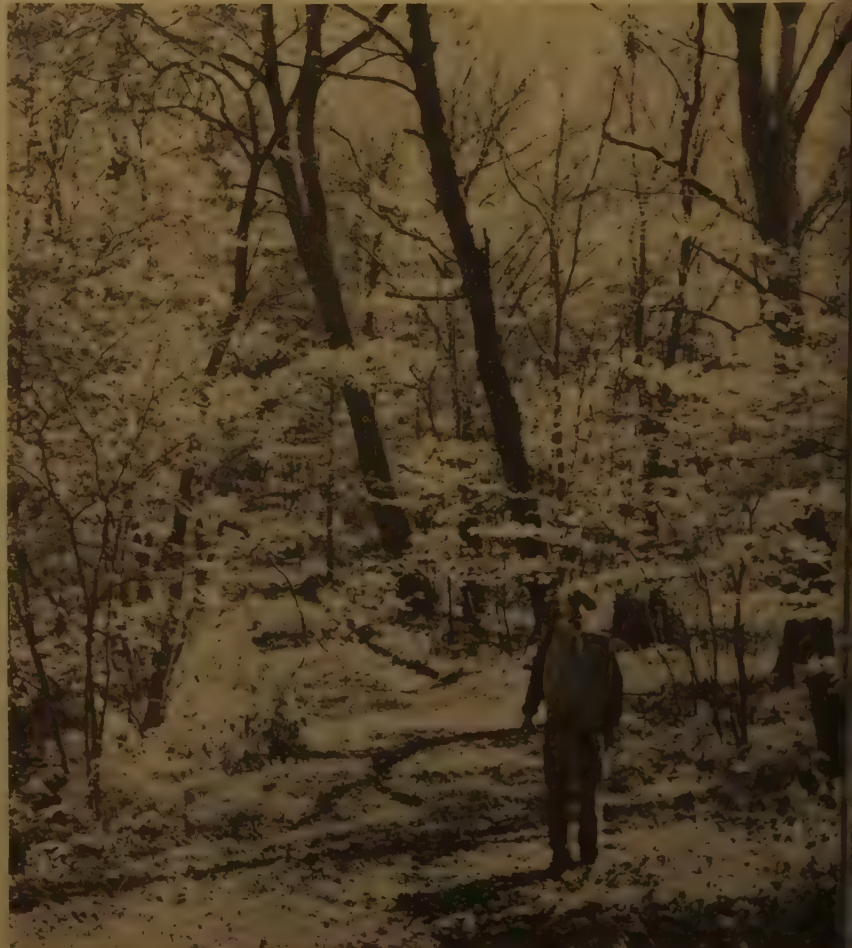
### Theme for April:

## I Think About Growth

### A Word to Parents

The materials on this page and on the next two pages are for your use in moments of worship with your children. If you have a family worship service daily in your home, some of the materials here may be used at that time. If you use *The Secret Place*, you may find that some of them fit into the meditations in that booklet.

—Donald Rettev



# To Use with Older Children

## A New Kind of April Fooling

It was April Fools' Day, and Jamie and Janie felt badly. They did not fool anyone yet. They had tied an empty pocketbook to the end of a string and left it hanging on the walk while they hid behind bushes and held the other end of the string. But no one had picked it up. Everyone seemed to know it was a joke. They had tried a good many other tricks, but so far not a single person had been fooled.

"It is no better than the first of March," said Jamie.

"Or the first of August," added Janie.

Jamie thought and thought of a way to fool someone. They must do that before the day was over! When the children reached their own home, they looked up and down the street hopefully. The only person in sight was old Mr. Reed. He was coming up the

street with a big market basket in one hand and his cane in the other. Presently the old gentleman reached the spot where Jamie and Janie stood. He set his basket down.

"Rather warm for the first of April," said old Mr. Reed. Then he wiped his brow. When he put his handkerchief back into his pocket he suddenly clapped his hand on another pocket.

"There! I forgot all about that money order! I shall have to go back to the post office and attend to it."

He gave such a deep sigh that Jamie and Janie wished they could do his errand.

"Could you please watch this basket while I am gone?" asked Mr. Reed. "It's pretty heavy to carry back up the hill again."

"Yes, sir," Jamie said. The children were glad they could do

something for Mr. Reed. He thanked them and went down the hill. They could hear the click of his cane as he walked away.

"And still there is no one we can fool," Janie said with a sigh.

"And now we can't even look for anyone to fool. We promised to stay here and watch the basket," Jamie said.

Just then Jamie happened to catch sight of his big red wagon at the side of his home.

"I know, Janie," he cried. "We'll fool Mr. Reed!"

Janie looked shocked. "Oh Jamie, we must not do that," she said reproachfully.

"Wait a minute," Jamie said. He ran into the yard, caught the handle of the wagon, pulled it onto the sidewalk. He lifted the heavy basket into it.

"Come, let's hurry, Janie," Jamie said with a smile.

Janie did not know what to make of it, but she followed along as they went up the hill to Mr. Reed's house.

"What will Mr. Reed say when he comes along, Jamie?"

Jamie was too much occupied to reply. When they reached Mr. Reed's house, Jamie turned in at the driveway.

"Why, Jamie, isn't this Mr. Reed's house?"

"Yes," replied Jamie as he rang the front doorbell.

"Mr. Reed had to go back to town to do an errand, so we brought his basket up the hill for him," explained Jamie to the lady who answered his ring.

When the twins got back to their own gate, there stood Mr. Reed looking about in surprise.

"Did somebody take my basket?" Mr. Reed asked.

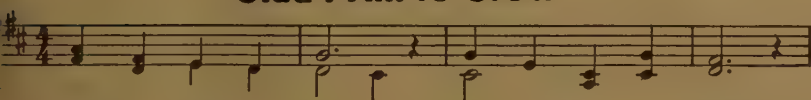
"Yes, somebody did," laughed Janie.

"April Fool," Jamie shouted. "I took it home for you myself."

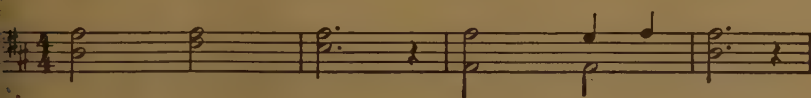
Mr. Reed laughed. "That's the best April fooling I ever had!" Then he went on home, his cane tapping on the walk.

—Julia Whittier Wolfe

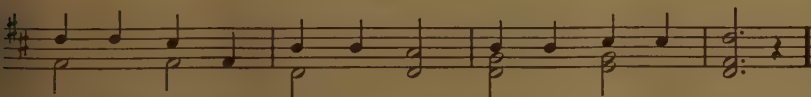
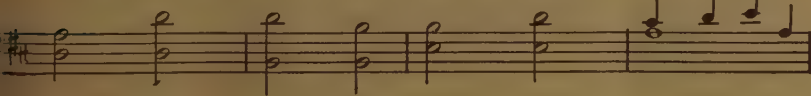
## Glad I Am to Grow<sup>1</sup>



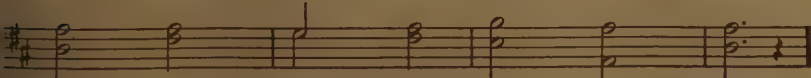
1. Glad I am to live! Glad I am to grow!  
2. Glad I am to live! Glad I am to grow!



I would grow as Je - sus grew, Strong in bod - y, strong to do  
Fa - ther, may each com - ing day, Make me strong to do Thy way



What is right and brave and true. Glad I am to grow!  
As I work and as I play. Glad I am to grow!



<sup>1</sup>Words and music from *Hymns for Primary Worship*. Copyright, 1946, The Westminster Press. Used by permission.



# For Family Worship

## God, Who Touchest Earth with Beauty

God, who touchest earth with beauty,  
Make me lovely too,  
With Thy Spirit recreate me,  
Make my heart anew.

Like Thy springs and running waters,  
Make me crystal pure,  
Like Thy rocks of towering grandeur  
Make me strong and sure.

Like Thy dancing waves in sunlight,  
Make me glad and free,  
Like the straightness of the pine tree,  
Let me upright be.

Like the arching of the heavens,  
Lift my thoughts above,  
Turn my dreams to noble action,  
Ministries of love.

God, who touchest earth with beauty,  
Make me lovely too,  
Keep me, ever, by Thy Spirit,  
Pure and strong and true.

—Mary S. Edgar

## Church Bells

The church bells call to tell us,  
"Come on, now. Don't delay.  
There's Sunday school this morning,  
So let's be on our way."

—Claire Saalbach

## April

Thank you, God, for April  
When trees turn green again  
And tulips lift their thirsty heads  
To catch a sip of rain.

—Claire Saalbach

## This Lovely World

The world is such a lovely place,  
With field and stream and tree,  
The sky above—the grass below,  
And folks like you, and me.

I like to think that God, who made  
Each lovely thing, and true,  
Has given them in sacred trust  
To folks like me, and you.

For sometimes, in the silver night,  
When stars shine bright and clear,  
I seem to hear him speak to me—  
And know that he is near.

"Oh, learn to love!" he whispers low.  
"Forgive, and gladly share.  
Then every day, this lovely world  
Will grow for you more fair!"

And so, I know it's up to us—  
To folks like you, and me,  
To keep this world the lovely place  
That God would have it be!

—Mary Peacock<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>From *Juniors*. Copyright, 1952, The American Baptist Publication Society. Used by permission.

**Worship Center:** Spring blossoms and leaves will help to set the theme for your worship this month. Children can assume responsibility for arranging this center. To do so would provide opportunity for growth in dependability.

**Call to Worship:** And Jesus increased in wisdom and in stature, and in favor with God and man.

—Luke 2:52.

**Song:** Use the song printed on page 19 or choose between "I Would Follow Jesus," primary pupil's book, year two, winter quarter, page 35 and "A Birthday Wish," primary pupil's book, year two, summer, page 45.

**Poem:** Use one of the poems printed on this page, or choose between "On a Birthday," primary pupil's book, year two, winter, page 43 and "Prayer on a Birthday," primary pupil's book, year two, summer, page 36.

**Story:** If you have young children in your family, use the story on page 18 or 19; if you have school-

age children, use one of the following stories: "The Boy Jesus in the Temple," primary pupil's book, year two, fall, page 8; "How Jesus Grew," primary pupil's book, year two, winter, page 33; "Growing in Wisdom," primary pupil's book, year two, summer, page 34.

**Meditation:** Plan your own meditation based upon a favorite passage of Scripture, upon the song, the poem, or the story used.

**Song:** Use another of the songs suggested above.

**Prayer:** Suit your prayer to the experiences of your family group. Express gratitude for the growth that has come to each and to a pet in the home. The prayer by Frances Bourne Taft, printed here, may be used or adapted: "Our Father, we are happy that Fluffy's kittens have come. It is wonderful that she could keep them safe inside her box until they were big and strong enough to live outside. We are sure You planned it that way. Thank You, God, for planning for little kittens. Thank You for planning for us, too. Amen."

Ginie  
Glasmair

# Roger Robin Sings



AS SOON AS THE BLUE  
EGG CRACKED, Roger Robin  
poked his beak through to smell  
the spring air. Oh, but the world  
smelled good! He knew just from  
the cherry-blossomy fragrance that  
what was going to like it. He jiggled  
his head a little more and was  
satisfied.

He felt very cold. He crept  
step into the fuzzy down that  
lined his nest. Then he felt the  
soft warmth of his mother's body.  
He knew her love and was safe.

In the days that followed, he was  
very hungry and learned to cry  
for food. His mother brought it  
to him. During the rainy nights,  
he cuddled against her for warmth.  
However, he was not impressed, be-  
cause that's what mothers are for!  
He felt his feathers begin to  
grow and knew that they would  
be brown and shiny on his back  
and soft and orange on the breast.  
But then, all robins have a brown  
back and orange vest.

Later he saw the snow-white  
cherry blossoms float to the  
ground. He hated to have them  
go, for they made a very pleasant

home. He thought it was too bad  
that such beautiful flowers must  
fall. Their stay was too short to  
be very important. They couldn't  
have amounted to much to have  
died so quickly.

Now he no longer cried loudly,  
but chirped. He listened to his  
father in the cherry tree. He saw  
his throat swell as the beautiful  
song poured out. How wonderful  
he was! How the music flowed  
into the summer air until it  
seemed that the whole world heard  
the praise that his father sang.  
If Roger could just sing like that!  
How he would practice until he  
could!

Roger worked and worked. He  
stood on his very tiptoes in his  
nest and stretched his body as long  
as he could and swelled his throat  
as large as he could—but all that  
came out was a feeble little chirp.

He began to talk to everyone  
about his ambition. He told Mrs.  
Ladybug that someday he was  
going to sing like his father.

"What are you going to sing  
about?" she asked.

"Oh," shrugged Roger, "it  
doesn't matter *what* I sing about—  
it's how *good* I sing that counts."

Mrs. Ladybug flicked her gossa-  
mer wings. "Tut, tut," she  
scolded and flew away.

Roger practiced and practiced,  
but all that came out was the  
feeble little chirp. One day as he  
stretched extra far and tried extra  
hard, he lost his balance and  
tumbled out of the nest! He  
flapped his wings frantically, but  
his mother comforted him on the  
ground. "Never mind," she said,  
"it is time you left the nest and  
learned to fly and hunt food."

"When will I learn to sing?"  
asked Roger.

His mother looked up at his  
father singing in the branches and  
smiled. "What would you sing  
about?" she asked fondly.

"Oh," Roger answered care-  
lessly, "it doesn't matter what I  
sing *about*—but how *good* I sing."

(Continued on page 28)



# Does the Church Help?

By Elizabeth Norton Jones

IT HAS BEEN SAID that the church is the greatest divisive force in Christian family life today. Surely it was said facetiously; nevertheless, many families who conscientiously try to support the church program would partially agree. During one week, Daddy and Mother go to the meeting of the Primary Department parents, and to the monthly Couples' Class supper. Daddy is a deacon. On Tuesday night he goes calling on prospective church members. Mother teaches in the church school kindergarten, so, spends Saturday afternoon arranging the room for Sunday. Jim practices with the Junior Choir on Saturday morning, and is in the church membership class after school on Friday. Barbara, a high-school junior, has choir practice on Thursday night, Youth Fellowship Sunday night, and a Youth Fellowship service project Saturday afternoon. Early Sunday evening the whole family attends the School of Missions at church, but are in different age level classes. Even on Sunday mornings, because of its excellent, closely graded program, the church divides, rather than unifies, its families. How, then, does the church help families to achieve their goals of vital, dynamic Christian living?

Perhaps the most obvious contribution the church makes through its Christian education program, is by the curriculum materials, literature, and letters sent into the homes. Denominational curriculum is planned and written by persons who feel that Christian education is as much the responsibility of the home as of the church. Therefore, much of the curriculum is written especially for parents, to be used as they endeavor to practice at home the Christian truths taught in the church school classes.

In a recent leadership training class studying "The Home and Church Working Together for Children," the assignment was given to one couple, Mr. and Mrs. Ryan, to bring to class all of the aids received from their church, which had helped them as they tried to develop a genuine Christian family life. When they returned the following week, the Ryans had collected a scrapbook full of sample copies of "Message to Parents," Nursery Packet letters, and pupil's story books. *Hearthstone* magazine was represented by the family worship pages. There were copies of story papers for primaries, juniors, and teen-agers. Included also was a simply framed picture of "Jesus and the Children," mounted and framed during church school by one of the children, and taken home during Christian Family Week for use in the family worship corner. There was a suggested Christmas

Eve family worship service, and a mimeographed list of good religious books for the family. One page of the scrapbook held letters received from the church school teachers, telling of special assignments given for "home work," or suggesting ways the parents could help during the week. One letter was a report of a parents' meeting which the Ryans had been obliged to miss. Still another was a reminder of a family roller skating party, held by the senior high for church families. On another page was a Nursery news letter which told of new babies born into church families, explained plans for the coming month, and contained a plea for magazine pictures to be used with the emphasis for the month. One section held pamphlets, such as "Helping Your Child to Know the Bible," "A Year's Calendar for a Christian Home."

"We feel," Mrs. Ryan explained, "that all these things help us to know what is important to each member of our family. It's true that we use our separate ways many times at church, but we share our enthusiasms and plans. For instance, Jim and the Junior Choir is singing "Fairest Lord Jesus" in church service soon. The director sent home the words, and we have used the song as part of our family worship this week. When the choir sing, Jim won't be sitting in church with us, but we will all feel close to each other because we have sung the song together at home."

"When this letter came from the Nursery asking for pictures about pets, Jim and Patty were in the Primary Department. One rainy afternoon they cut out and mounted several pictures to send to the Nursery with Debby the next Sunday. Even Barbara noticed a picture in the Sunday paper of a little girl looking at a tiny turtle. Daddy was included in the project when he was asked to help decide which colors were best for mounting. Just this one simple request helped our family in three ways. First, it gave us a leisurely, family project for a rainy day, one that could be completed before interest lagged, and one which even the older members of the family could join momentarily. Second, it gave us an opportunity to discuss naturally and informally little Debby's church school "lesson," as we talked about different kinds of pets and God's plan for them. Finally, it made it possible for us to give Debby a real sense of personal worth—her church school class and its needs were important to us. It seems to me that one of the functions of a Christian family is to help each member, even the youngest, to have this feeling of personal dignity and worth."

## Study Article and Guide for Parents' Groups

"But what would you do if your church didn't send this curriculum material or information about what they are doing?" another member of the class asked. "We never know what is happening in the church school, or what is expected of us."

"Isn't it the responsibility of a Christian family to help the church to help them?" asked Mr. Ryan. "I think if we didn't receive word in some way about lessons for our children, that we would try to find out ourselves. We might ask to visit each class one Sunday. We'd try to talk with the teacher, perhaps inviting her to dinner. We'd ask her what she expects us to do, and what would help her. We might suggest what other parents would like to know also. A friend of ours in another church regularly arranges a parents' bulletin board at the church to share information with all families."

"You might ask permission to edit a 'Children's Corner' for your church news bulletin, with brief items by each class or department," the teacher of the class added. "Or perhaps you can express your desire for more information to your pastor or Christian Education Board or Committee. Often, churches do not provide these helps for families because they feel the families do not want them, and will not use them."

"I'd like to ask the Ryans how they help their children do their 'home work' on the church school lesson each week," questioned another class member. "Our little ones are too small to work by themselves, and our older ones can't be bothered with it."

Mr. Ryan answered. "We've tried several ways, changing as the children grow older and their interests change. When they were tiny, we would tell them stories from their nursery books at bedtime or bedtime. Often we would sing nursery or kindergarten songs together. Sometimes we would sing a nursery 'Thank you, God' as a grace. One year, before the children were in the upper grades and high school, the family set aside Saturday evening as family night. Each would read and study his lesson, even their mother and I. Then one or two would share a story or an idea. Usually we would get into discussion, thinking through how a lesson had meaning for us. We would close our evening with a family worship time, using poems, songs, and scriptures from the church school lessons."

Mrs. Ryan continued, "Last year our children became increasingly busy on Saturday nights, so we tried to be together on Sunday afternoon. One idea was fun and worthwhile. Each summed up the mes-

sage of the morning's class in one sentence. That is difficult to do without a great deal of thought. Also, we would decide on one scripture verse or passage as our guide for the week, each one reporting the next Sunday on interesting experiences relating to that verse. We'll not soon forget the experience of sincerely setting out to win one new friend to Christ. After several weeks of praying and working, we all saw one of Barbara's friends baptized and her mother and father join the church. The family really knew the meaning of personal evangelism then.

"Actually, everything that we do at home has some influence on the Christian education of our children and their Christian development, doesn't it?" suggested a class member. "And equally important are our attitudes. When we are sincerely interested in the church activities, our children seem to reflect that interest. Children and young people seem to sense a lukewarm interest. When we enthusiastically support a missionary project, our children become tremendously interested in it too, and the Christian outreach of the whole family is broadened. For instance, when the foreign missionary theme last year was



—Jurgen Jacobsen of Three Lions

Songs sung at church become more valuable in the Christian growth of children if also used in the home in family singing or worship. A record is sometimes made available to the family for teaching a new song.



Japan, our family sought out a Christian family in Japan as pen pals, and corresponded with them regularly."

The teacher broke in, "Don't you think that when a family does not support the church program enthusiastically, does not follow through on church school projects—or when the parents are definitely not interested in things religious—don't you think that those parents are teaching religion, too? However, they are teaching wrong religious attitudes to their children. The church may have much help to give families, but the families must also be ready to receive that help. It's a partnership, really, of the home and the church working together."

A young father had been sitting quietly during the discussion. Now he spoke. "It seems to me that the church helps families in other ways than these. My wife and I receive immeasurable inspiration from

fellowship with other Christian couples who have problems and opportunities like ours. Our church plans a Sunday class for young couples, where we study and discuss and seek God's way for our family living. We often get together during the week, sometimes just for an informal evening of fellowship with one or two other couples from the class. Occasionally we have a work night when we paint nursery furniture, or wax floors, or wash windows, and talk as we work. I think our families benefit when parents are inspired to live more consistent, Christian lives themselves. Then the whole atmosphere of our home becomes a place where both parents and children can grow spiritually."

Thus the church does help. Why don't you, now think for a minute of the ways *your* church helps *you* and *your* family in your daily Christian family life? How could you and your church work together more effectively?

for "Does the Church Help?"

# Study Guide



## Preparation

1. A committee of parents and church school representatives should be appointed to plan the meeting. The chairman of this committee probably would act as leader for the meeting.

2. The committee members should read the article and discuss it among themselves before planning the meeting.

3. Decide on the plan of discussion (see "Conducting the Meeting").

4. Secure those who will take part in the meeting, and plan with them.

5. Adequately advertise the meeting by posters, personal invitations, and phone calls. Suggest the reading of the article before the meeting.

6. Invite resource persons. Surely for this meeting some church school teachers should be present. Officers of couples' classes could be invited.

7. Collect for a display the curriculum materials used in the church school, including pictures and song books. Display also other helps provided by the church, such as pamphlets, letters, books from the church library. You may want to obtain from your denominational book store, inexpensive prints of religious pictures to have for sale, or copies of good children's books. Often parents do not know where to purchase such articles, or cannot find them in local stores.

8. Write for sample materials on Family Life Education to Richard E. Lentz (Disciples of Christ), Department of

Family Life, 222 S. Downey Avenue, Indianapolis 7, Indiana, or to Joseph John Hanson (American Baptist), Director of Adult Work and Family Life, 1703 Chestnut Street, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

## Conducting the Meeting

Often the success of a meeting is decided during the moments when folk are arriving. Have the displays of materials, books, and pictures set up for browsing before the meeting. Be sure someone who can answer questions is in charge of each display.

Each couple could be asked, on entering, to list how they are helped by the church. Ideas can be added as the meeting progresses. Each could be given a simple packet containing paper for these notes, and a few pamphlets chosen from samples sent from the denominational office.

After a very brief word of welcome, and an explanation of the purpose for the meeting, one of the following plans can be followed. Whichever is used, three questions should be answered definitely before the close of the evening:

1. What is our church doing now to help families in their Christian family living?

2. What additional help do families desire and need?

3. How can this help be provided? Make a few definite plans for action.

Plan 1. Discussion between a teacher

and a parent with the leader as moderator on a subject such as, "How Our Church Helps Families." This could be followed by an open discussion, or by question and answer period. In a general discussion such as this, it is often helpful to "plant" a few questions to stimulate the discussion.

Plan 2. Role playing of two or three family situations, such as:

1. A family receives a letter from the church telling of a youth project. How does the family co-operate?

2. A family council discussion of family problem.

3. The study of the church school lesson.

4. Approaching the pastor or Board of Christian Education to request additional help or information.

5. Solving the problem of which church activities to support when it is not possible to support all.

Plan 3. Buzz groups on the article with each group discussing a different emphasis in the article, such as:

1. How can families avoid having a feeling of being separated by the church program, and yet support it? This might include a discussion on how to better schedule the program.

2. How to use the curriculum helps.

3. How to distribute other helps and stimulate an interest in their use. Samples should be available.

4. Discuss pictures, books, records and their use in the family life.

Plan 4. Workshop groups. These might be scheduled to follow each of the others for a half hour, if time permits or could be the entire meeting if preceded by a review of the article and a discussion of the three questions.

1. One group working on a service of dedication of parents for the workshop period.

2. Another group setting up an at

(Continued on page 30)

## Man Meets Cat

(Continued from page 9)

hands and knees, with his face close to the dirty sewer entrance. He hesitated, then crawled into the pipe, pushing the bucket before him.

Ted's eyes never left the rope, and finally he saw it jerked a signal, and McGillicuddy pulled. His father slowly backed out of the sewer. He was squishy, smelly, and he gasped for breath. McGillicuddy pulled the bucket out, and there was Robin—in the bucket, still mewling.

The patient newspaper photographer slapped him on the back and asked if he could take some pictures. After the third or fourth picture, Jeff said, "Let's take her home now." "I'll bet when the whole city sees her picture in the paper, a lot of people will want to give her a nice home, don't you, mother?" asked the boy.

"Well, they might not even print the pictures, son," his mother answered him. She added softly, "Don't count too

heavily on it. Let's all get some sleep now, honey."

The next day, Jeff walked to the corner for the morning paper. If the 'human interest' story and picture were published, thought Jeff, then it would be easy to get rid of Robin. But who wanted to get rid of Robin? A guy could change his mind, couldn't he?

When he reached home, they spread out the paper. On page three, Robin's eyes, peering over the edge of the bucket, looked at them inquiringly.

The ringing phone sent Ted running to answer it. "Yes, yes, Ma'am. Yes, Ma'am!"

"Just a minute, Ted," cut in Jeff. "Don't tell anyone they can have Rob!"

"Wait a minute, please," said the boy into the phone. "But, Dad, it's some advertising company, Darcy or something like that. They want to know if I'll let Robin pose for an illustration for \$10.00!"

Jeff thought fast, "Tell 'em sure!"

Robin, sitting in the center of the kitchen floor, preened herself.

## BIBLEGRAM

by Hilda E. Allen

Guess the words defined below and write them over their numbered dashes. Then transfer each letter to the correspondingly numbered square in the pattern. The colored squares indicate word endings.

Reading from left to right, you will find that the filled pattern will contain a selected quotation from the Bible.

Long-haired cat -----	64	13	114	34	30	7
Under -----	107	95	42	5	96	
Piece of material used to cover a hole -----	23	81	77	85	94	
Act of daring or skill done to attract attention -----	66	31	53	113	88	
Payment for breaking a law or regulation -----	89	43	20	80		
Hard covering of a clam -----	38	120	28	108	65	
Kind of pool where the water moves rapidly in a circle -----	32	6	49	100	92	
To go or come after -----	44	36	54	98	76	3
Hurry -----	1	12	62	45	84	69
Call in a loud voice -----	111	27	72	24	60	
Wooly animals -----	18	58	106	67	47	
Something worn on the wrist ---	57	22	55	9	48	
Popular kind of chicken bone ---	79	104	50	14		
Comical -----	63	46	39	75	93	
Quintuplets -----	115	61	105	101		

P New Hampshire State flower ---	99	97	122	68	102	
Q Like a voice with a cold -----	33	40	15	116	74	2
R Mixed-up mess -----	118	90	35	71	10	86
S Exchange one thing for another--	41	25	59	83	73	
T A bit of medicine -----	70	117	110	103		
U Something to ride -----	4	123	82	51	121	
V Got up -----	19	124	56	78	109	
W Make amends for something ---	29	119	52	16	26	
X Expired -----	21	112	37	125		
Y To slip, as on ice -----	8	91	87	17	11	

(Solution on page 30)

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35	36
37	38	39	40	41	42	43	44	45
46	47	48	49	50	51	52	53	54
55	56	57	58	59	60	61	62	63
64	65	66	67	68	69	70	71	72
73	74	75	76	77	78	79	80	81
82	83	84	85	86	87	88	89	90
91	92	93	94	95	96	97	98	99
100	101	102	103	104	105	106	107	108
109	110	111	112	113	114	115	116	117
118	119	120	121	122	123	124	125	



WHEN THAT IRRESISTIBLE URGE to play jokes on others comes along with April, that is the time to plan a foolin' party. All the tricks old and new can be brought into play to make this one of the jolliest party times of the entire year.

Green and yellow are famous April Fool colors and can be used in many ways in the decorations. The fun and foolin' will start at the front door if the arriving guests are confronted with a big sign saying, VACANT! JUST SOLD! MOVED—To Back of House! This will mean, of course, that the guests will have to enter by way of the back door. Another sign on the back door could read, NOBODY HOME! But from the sounds of merriment on the inside, and the light left burning at the door, no one is too badly fooled.

Once entrance to the house has been gained the late arrivals will probably find the other guests involved in a lively game of Foolish Taps. The players are seated in a circle, alternating young men and girls. The leader turns to the

neighbor on his right and taps her gently on her cheek while he says, "It's a foolish gesture, but don't you tell!" The player just tapped turns to the neighbor on her right and repeats the performance, and so on around the circle. The object of the taps becomes apparent when a boy and a girl (who have previously been supplied with containers of burnt cork, or soot), dip into those concealed containers with their fingers just before patting their neighbors' cheeks, leaving black marks, visible to all except the players who are wearing the foolish decorations. But, of course, the others have been asked not to tell, so all they do is grin. If, however, they can keep from laughing, another round may be played, this time tapping the noses of the players and so on until the victims catch on to the April Fool joke.

At this party pull a switch on the old April Fool jokes that everyone knows. On a painted chair hang a sign saying, "This chair has not been newly painted so you

may sit on it." You will find the guests walking around it, touching and testing and, even after that, perhaps refusing to sit on it.

Then they will be shy about investigating the handkerchief on the floor beside the sign, "This is not pinned down." That too will tell the truth, but everyone will doubt it. The same procedure can be followed with a box of candy prominently displayed on a table beside the sign, "These chocolates are not filled with cotton: taste one!" This is true but it will fool a brave person who discovers and takes advantage of this sign. If you try all the old tricks that formerly fooled folks, then when they begin to feel secure, bring on some new stunts. One such as the following could be used.

Bring in the punch bowl and place beside it a sign saying, "The punch will pep you up—help yourself!" But don't urge them enough to give away the joke, for the punch is only pure water colored with red vegetable coloring with a few slices of orange, lemon and sprigs of mint floating



## A WHO'S FOOL

top, and a huge cake of ice in the center. You need not fear that those fooled will give away "sell," and you will probably ice the victims leading other suspicious guests to the water. Another good April Fool joke is this. Choose the jolliest, best-dressed guest and give him a big build-up by calling on all present to watch him perform a feat of magic and great endurance by sliding an egg between his first and second fingers for fifteen seconds without dropping it. The victim is instructed to extend his fingers through the space at the hinged side of an open door. The egg (and for obvious reasons should be a hard-boiled one) is then placed between the two extended fingers. The leader counts the fifteen seconds and then walks away, calling the others to line up after him and start another game, thus leaving the victim to his own devices for getting out of his predicament.

For this April Fool contest seat the guests and supply each one with a pencil and a sheet of paper

across the top of which has been printed the letters, D-E-J-N-O-O-R-S-T-U-W. The players are then asked to arrange the jumbled letters into just one word. There will be much chewing of pencils over this problem until some bright contestant remembers the phrase "just one word." That of course, is what they were asked to write.

Clowns and jesters play a big part in most April Fool plans so the guests will delight in their antics, especially when the clown does such a good job of balancing a feather on his nose. That is—until the others discover it is fastened there by a touch of glue.

The Jumping Jester is a game in which any number may take part. The players scatter about the room with the starter in the center. A rag doll, dressed in a jester's costume, is tossed to some player who hands it on to someone he thinks can keep it safely away from the starter. If the doll is passed behind the backs of the players while they all make motions of having it, it can become quite confusing for the start-

er. If several connecting rooms are being used, a tiny bell attached to the doll will be almost a necessity. Any player tagged while holding the Jester becomes the starter, and the eliminated starters drop out of the game. The ones staying in longest are the winners.

The refreshments may be as simple or as elaborate as the hostess wishes, but if possible, should have a few "sells" and surprises mixed in with the usual fare. Thus: a sandwich now and then in the stack to be passed, may contain a thin slice of paraffin instead of the expected cheese; an imitation pickle or two may by accident have slipped in with the others. And the ice cream may not be what it at first seems to be if it is served in little clay flowerpots and the top covered with finely grated dark chocolate with a sprig of mint, or parsley "planted" in the center.

For, as everyone well knows, things are not always what they appear to be when the spirit of April Fool is in the air.

# APRIL FOOL PARTY!

by loie brandom





## Roger Robin Sings!

(Continued from page 21)

"Tut, tut," said his mother sadly.

Roger continued to try. He didn't want to learn to fly or hunt worms. He wanted only to sing.

One day he met a fat ground mole. Roger began to brag that someday he would sing for all the world to hear.

"What will you sing about?" asked the sleek little mole, twitching his whiskers.

"Oh," replied Roger, "it doesn't matter what I sing *about*—but how *good* I sing!"

"Tut, tut," muttered the mole, diving into his tunnel under the ground.

Roger learned to find his food. He learned to fly—first to the fence post, then to the lilac bush, then to the cherry tree. Above him was the lovely blue sky. But Roger didn't pay attention

to the sky. It was supposed to be blue and beautiful. All he wanted was to practice his singing.

One day he saw little green balls on the cherry tree. How queer! Daily he watched them grow larger and turn red. How strange!

He asked his mother, "What are these little balls?"

"Do you remember the lovely cherry blossoms?" she asked.

"Yes," he said. "What a shame they lasted such a short time. They were not worth anything."

"You are wrong," contradicted Mother Robin. "They were very important, for they started these balls. Without the flowers, there would be no cherries. God planned that the blossoms would fall so that the fruit would grow for food. Everything in the world is ordered by God's love for us. Taste one and see what the blossoms died for."

Roger grasped a plump ball and broke the firm meat from the seed. How delicious it was—so juicy and tart. Suddenly he realized what a wonderful

world this was where blossoms didn't really die, but fell away so that little green balls could form which would grow into plump fruit.

His heart seemed to swell with gladness for the lovely fallen blossoms, for the good cherries, for the guarding softness of his mother, for blue sky and fragrant summer air.

He knew he had to tell the world how happy he felt. He had to sing praises to the God who had created all things and make up the good world.

He flew to the top branch and the among the cherries he looked up into the sky and swelled his throat. His body quivered and, all at once, the music flowed from him all through the cherry tree and out into the wide, wide world for all to hear.

Mrs. Ladybug stopped as she crawled along the trunk. Mother Robin cocked her head and looked up. Mole stopped his scurrying and sat up on his haunches. They all smiled. For Roger had learned how to sing when he had learned what to sing *about*!

This is the way we  
did it . . .

## We Grew in Grace

by  
vivian  
preston

One evening our Susan came home from a girl friend's. "Mother, Mrs. Brown asked me to say grace. I was terribly embarrassed."

"Did you do it?"

"I . . . I couldn't. I guess the cat had my tongue."

I realized then that my husband and I had unintentionally neglected this part of Susan and Jimmy's education, and I wondered how to remedy it. We had never used a "rote" blessing, feeling that, in time, the words were just mouthed and the reverence was lost.

I decided that I would ask the children to say the blessing in turn.

"Would you like to say grace tonight, Jimmy?" I asked. He squirmed. I waited, then turned to Susan.

"You do it, Mother," she said off-handedly after an uncomfortable silence.

"Just say what is in your heart,

dear," I encouraged. In the end, it was I who gave thanks.

At our Bible bookstore the following morning I bought a package of attractive paper napkins with printed graces across one corner. That night, intrigued by the novelty, Jimmy and Susan read them in unison. "At least it's a start," I told my husband.

At the store I had thumbed through some books containing simple graces and bought one which I read to the children, explaining that the thoughts were the author's way of giving thanks to God.

During our family Bible reading a few nights later, my husband read, "It is good to give thanks to the LORD, to sing praises to thy name, O Most High; to declare thy steadfast love in the morning and thy faithfulness by night."

Looking up, he said, "That would be a good one to say at the table, wouldn't it? Perhaps we can find more."

We began to collect scriptural verses suitable for before-meal graces, writing them on separate slips of paper and placing them in a bowl on the table. It soon became a game to see who could find the most appropriate. We took turns drawing them out of the bowl and reading them while the others sat with heads bowed. The children loved the idea.

When their friends stayed for meals, I invited them to ask the blessing. At the slightest hesitancy, the bowl was offered, and Susan and Jimmy quickly explained its use. In a surprising short time our children were making up their own, individual graces; and I gradually limited the use of the bowl when the family was alone. Now they volunteer with each other to find things to mention in their evening graces. They have included the first tulip on the table, Jimmy's green onion grown from the sets that I bought, even the gray, bush-tailed squirrel that makes us laugh with his capers. Thankfulness for unearned gifts from God is coming more easily from the lips. Little by little our family is growing in grace as we ask the Lord's blessing at the dinner table.



# family Counselor

**Q** My two-year-old cries over every little thing, and throws herself down and kicks. She doesn't want her bike until her sister gets on it, then she has a temper tantrum. Should I make each child play with only her own toys, should I encourage sharing and taking turns? Perhaps she is not old enough to understand such a policy, but from morning to night she whines and cries.

**A** Your first concern, of course, should be to discover why your two-year-old whines and frets from morning till night. Be sure, for example, that she has a good physical examination so that if there is any physical reason for her behavior, it may be discovered and remedied.

Ask yourself, also, some serious questions about how her days are spent. Does she have a well-ordered day, with plenty of sleep and nourishing food? A child who is fatigued or undernourished is not a happy child. Ask yourself, too, if she has a few—not many—simple toys that she can handle easily.

Does she have a place of her own to keep these toys, and an opportunity to play with them unmolested by older children? If she plays primarily with older children—or just the older sister—perhaps she is overstimulated by trying to keep up with them. Make certain, too, that she is not teased a great deal, either by her sister or by thoughtless adults.

In other words, try to provide for her the calm routine that is so satisfying to a child of this age. Why not go to the public library and take out some pamphlets and books that discuss the needs of two-year-olds. You might find some helpful suggestions for your problem in them.

After you have tried to provide a happier environment for your daughter, you are then ready to tackle the problem of taking turns and sharing. Remember that a two-year-old is quite possessive with respect to his toys and possessions and is not likely to want to share them with other children. Although there is no reason why you should not suggest to her from time to time that she might take turns with her sister or another child, you must not expect to be too successful.

When your child does share or take turns, praise her for doing so. However, don't scold her when she doesn't share. After all, if the toy is her own, she has a right to decide whether another child will play with it. One way of beginning to teach her to respect the possessions of others is to respect her rights to her own possessions. If she doesn't want her sister to ride the bike, then

let the sister know that she must not do so. Let it be understood, too, that the older sister will not ride the bike without asking the permission of the two-year-old. It should be remembered, however, that many times children, whose first inclination is to forbid another child to play with their toys, relent when they realize that their wishes will be respected.

Be on the alert, too, for those occasions when your two-year-old wants to play with her sister's toys. You have an opportunity then to let the sister make the decision. These occasions afford you an opportunity to suggest to each child that sometimes it is nice to take turns playing with toys. It is through this gradual process of finding out that it is fun to take turns and to share, that children increasingly become willing to do so.

I might add that it is a common experience for a small child to ignore a particular toy until another child wants it. So your daughter's feelings are normal. When she has a tantrum, make sure that she cannot hurt herself physically, and then ignore it. She must discover that she cannot get what she wants merely by means of temper tantrums.

*Donald M. Maynard*



(Continued from page 15)

When children have been given the opportunity to make choices all their lives and know that they can depend upon their parents for encouragement and guidance they are more ready to make important decisions for themselves.

A similar example concerns clothes. Who hangs up the family's clothes? Is each member responsible for taking care of his own, or is Mother constantly picking up after her children? If she is, she is being fair neither to herself nor to her children. She is depriving them of the opportunity to grow in their consideration of her as a person and in their development of responsibility.

The example set by parents is tremendously important to the child. There is confidence and rightful pride within the boy or girl who can say with assurance, "If Dad [or Mom] said he would do it, he WILL!"

duct, or of rules, made with open minds and in the spirit of love should be encouraged. These can be profitable not only to the children or young people, but also to the parents. Children who understand, help to set and accept standards at home, do not often depart from them when they are away from home.

## Biblegram Solution

(Biblegram on page 25)

(Psalm 24: 4-5)

A	Angora	M	Wish
B	Below	N	Funny
C	Patch	O	Five
D	Stunt	P	Lilac
E	Fine	Q	Hoarse
F	Shell	R	Muddle
G	Whirl	S	Trade
H	Follow	T	Dose
I	Hasten	U	Horse
J	Shout	V	Arose
K	Sheep	W	Atone
L	Watch	X	Died

(Continued from page 24)

Plan how to use the results of the workshop groups.

### Worship Period

1. Led by a family using
  - a. church school materials for resources, or
  - b. suggestions for "Family Worship" in *Hearthstone*, or
  - c. resources from *Guideposts* or *Creative Family Worship* by Gebhard.

2. Service of dedication by a workshop group.

## Resources

- ## Wilbur



# BOOKS for the hearthside

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## For Adults

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Again we call your attention to those useful, authoritative, brief booklets published as **Public Affairs Pamphlets** (Public Affairs Committee, 22 East 38th Street, New York 16). There are two issued in past months that are of particular interest to parents. All are available at 25 cents each.

*Time for Music*—A Guide for Parents (No. 260) written by Beatrice Handeck. Provides suggestions on the ways to introduce properly the world of music to their children in the home. The first step is not "piano lessons," but establishing music as an enjoyable experience.

*Your Community and Mental Health* (No. 263) will acquaint you with some aspects of one of the most prevalent problems in America today. Elizabeth L. Dach shows what can be done to meet the challenge of this threat to modern life.

*You and Your Adopted Child* (No. 274) by Eda J. LeShan helps the growing number of adoptive parents see that in spite of some special problems successful parenthood is not much different for them than for those who are natural parents.

Families with young children will find in *Quiet Time*, compiled by Edward J. Staples (The Upper Room, Nashville, 1958, 256 pages, 50 cents), a helpful guide to daily devotions. The material provided is all of interest to children of early school age and

follows a common pattern of brief scripture passage, a life-situation story, and a prayer. This volume was preceded by *Prayer Time* and *Worship Time*, both compiled by the same author, who is the director of the Department of Christian Family Life for The Methodist Church.

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## For Young People

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The author of *Kalena* (Longmans, Green and Co., Inc., 1958, 181 pages, \$3) is Esma Rideout Booth, who lives in the Belgian Congo and writes about the young people there who are facing a new kind of life as industrialization grows. The young Africans are attending schools, working in cities, and are marrying by choice. *Kalena*, is typical of the young people adjusting to changing mores. For instance, she is promised to Mulela, a chieftain's son, who has paid part of her dowry. However, *Kalena* falls in love with another fellow. Can she wriggle out of tribal tradition to marry her true love? *Kalena's* mother is very ill. Should she make her mother go to the dispensary for help, when her mother doesn't want the evil spirits to become even more angry? These and other vital decisions have to be decided. Throughout the book the old customs are vividly contrasted with the new. It is impossible not to feel with *Kalena* the strong tensions between the two. Add to this the attractive illustrations by E. Harper Johnson and you

have a book young people can't help but enjoy.

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## For Children

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A book planned especially for parents and adult friends of young children is *Preschool Party Parade*, by Bernice Hogan (Abingdon Press, 112 pages, \$2.25). The book describes 24 different preschool parties. There are simple celebrations for the one-year-old to the more elaborate parties for six-year-olds, and all ages in between. A special section contains suggestions for holidays and "just-for-fun" parties. Suggestions cover a wide area, including invitations, decorations, games, stories, favors, and food. This book will be a boon to busy parents who may not realize that parties for preschoolers can be fun!

The fertile mind and facile pen of Bernice Wells Carlson have produced another handicraft book, *Make It and Use It!* (Abingdon Press, 1958, 160 pages, \$2.50). There are concise descriptions for making several hundred gift items. Each chapter groups together items made from the same basic materials, all of which are easy to find, or are inexpensive to buy. The directions are clear and easy to follow. The detailed illustrations by Aline Hansens will help to motivate boys and girls from eight and up to try the ideas. Parents will find this a good book for their boys and girls to use at home.



# OVER THE BACK FENCE

## A Response to Don

Here is a response to the article in November, 1958, *Hearthstone* that we feel will provide a change in our Over the Back Fence visit this month.

"I was somewhat shocked to read 'Like Job, I Boil' by Don Heron in the November issue of *Hearthstone*, although I agree that as parents we must all be very careful not to get involved in our church work to the detriment of our homes and families. I feel very strongly that my home, my husband, and my children are God-given responsibilities and as such must have priority on my services and time. But as God is so generous in giving to me can I refuse him a share of my time and talents?

"Don has a blessing he will never fully appreciate for he doesn't know what it is to have parents who care for no church, who have no love for God, who feel no responsibility for or interest in God's work. He will never know what it is to have to fight every step of the way for the privilege of attending church, for the joy of serving him, for the wonderful and incomparable fellowship of Christian people. He will never know what it is to have joined the church in his late teens in secret for fear his parents would create a scene during the service if they knew of it, or to endure their wrath when they were told.

"Don has a most precious heritage—parents who love him, who love God and want to serve God, and in serving God aid all mankind. There must be a special reward for such kindly folks, doing unnoticed and thankless tasks. If I were handing out crowns the first would go to the people who guided me in my youth, encouraged and

comforted me, and by their love and kindness led me to Christ.

"Perhaps instead of waiting impatiently Don could have helped straighten the hymnals, or he could have shown the visitor around the church. Most people would be favorably impressed by a tour led by a youth who cares for his church. Perhaps, too, he could have gone for the keys which his mother had forgotten.

"Perhaps Don did not realize that the few minutes his mother took to find the Bible atlas for Mr. Gilley or to look for Johnny's coat might have led Mr. Gilley or Mrs. Martin to think, 'My, isn't she kind and willing? If love of God makes people act that way then I want to be a Christian too. That would be worth missing the first few minutes of a ball game so that someone might be enabled to see Christian love in action.

"Whenever I think of the friends who played such an important part in my life, I thank God that our paths crossed. Perhaps someday I can repay them by leading someone else in the paths where I was led. I hope my own children and Don will someday know the joy of Christian service and give freely of their time and talents."—Joan Ann Unger.

## Parents—Stand Up for Standards

A study of a group of children covering a period of time from the late twenties has resulted in some interesting conclusions, expressed in these words by Dr. B. Harris in reporting the study.

"Although our study is not complete, we can affirm with confidence that parents who set standards and observe values sensitize their children to . . . the importance of education, the worth of achievement, and the need of work . . . Parents who display standards and values lay the groundwork for job satisfaction and social-mindedness. . . . I urge parents to lay ground rules for their youngsters which will preserve the forms of behavior and ideals of conduct that parents believe are important . . . even though difficult and unpopular."

# Poetry Page

## Spring Batter

What a queer mix-up when love birds are mating!  
Lengthier phone calls and vigorous dating;  
    Friskier small fry, for digging is news;  
    Pitchcards and marbles, and muddier shoes.  
Hopscotch and jacks, and jump-rope is chronic;  
Flying of kites, and annual tonic.

Out with the fishing rod, baseball and bats,  
Bicycles, roller skates, blossoming hats!  
    Patterns and pins, and fittings and sewing;  
    Mail order buying for seeding, and hoeing;  
Changing to cotton; the puppy dogs shedding;  
Burning of leaves and airing of bedding . . .

These are ingredients to handle with care,  
Blend with love's dreaming, and Spring's in the air!

—Ruth Linnea Erickson

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## Nesting

It doesn't take a fancy home  
To make a cozy nest,  
It only takes a thoughtful love  
To make a poor place blest.

It only takes some insight  
To see essential needs;  
It takes a lot of laughing  
And loving friendly deeds.

—Solveig Paulson Russell

—S. P. Russell





# Remember

... remember ... you  
were young ... you  
planned together ...  
for a Christian family  
... for a Christian  
home ... and you knew  
you would always be  
together ... remember?



This Is THE Magazine for the  
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family  
WEEK

May  
3-10

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